

## **What should I do when my children fight with one another?**

Whereas some siblings are lucky to become the best of friends, it is not uncommon for brothers and sisters to compete for attention, toys, and affection. As children develop, their changing needs significantly effect how they interact with one another.

When you begin to notice that your children are bickering and squabbles are breaking out, the most important restraint for parents is to not get involved unless there is a danger for physical harm. If you are quick to intervene, children are not able to practice resolving issues on their own and begin to expect that you will always be there to settle disputes.

When it is necessary to get involved, try to separate your children to give them an opportunity to calm down and think through their emotions. Try not to place too much focus on who is to blame as this will only increase the tension. Remember, it takes two to start an argument and both parties are responsible for the resolution. Always try to resolve by compromising so that everyone is able to gain something from the confrontation. The most important thing to remember when intervening in your children's conflicts is that you work *with* them in deescalating situations instead of doing it *for* them.

Always keep in mind that as children learn to manage their anger and resolve conflicts, they learn valuable skills such as managing their emotions, respecting others' opinions, compromising, and negotiating.